

Message Text

SECRET

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ORIGIN ARA-14

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DRAFTED BY: ARA:JFKEANE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMCONSUL BELIZE

S E C R E T STATE 238638

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS), PBOR, UK, GT, BB

SUBJECT: TODMAN-FORDE MEETING: BELIZE

1. OCTOBER 1 ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN MET WITH BARBADIAN FOREIGN MINISTER HENRY DE BOULAY FORDE. DISCUSSION OF NAVFAC NEGOTIATIONS AND CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT REPORTED BY SEPTELS.

2. FORDE SAID BELIZE WILL NOT ACCEPT A CESSION OF TERRITORY TO GUATEMALA; IT IS A PRINCIPLE THAT COLONIAL BORDERS MUST BE ADHERED TO WHEN A COLONY IS GRANTED INDEPENDENCE. IT WOULD BE WRONG FOR THE UK AND GUATEMALA TO STRIKE A DEAL CONTRARY TO THE WILL OF THE BELIZEAN PEOPLE; HE SAID MANY NATIONS WOULD OPPOSE A TERRITORIAL CESSION, CITING THE
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ALLEGED DEEP CONCERNS OF MALAYSIA, GUYANA, AND THE AFRICAN MEMBERS OF THE COMMONWEALTH, WHO WOULD FEEL THREATENED BY A BREACH OF THIS PRINCIPLE. FURTHERMORE, HE THOUGHT A CESSION TO GUATEMALA WOULD PROMPT MEXICO TO REASSERT ITS CLAIMS TO BELIZEAN TERRITORY. HE SUGGESTED THAT UK OFFER GUATEMALA FINANCIAL COMPENSATION INSTEAD OF TERRITORY. HE HOPED THE US WOULD USE ITS INFLUENCE WITH GUATEMALA AND THE

UK TO PREVENT A CESSION OF TERRITORY. SHOULD THE PROBLEM CONTINUE TO FESTER, IT WILL BE INTERNATIONALIZED, PARTICULARLY AT THE U.N.

3. TODMAN RESPONDED THAT OUR INTEREST IS HELPING TO FIND A SOLUTION WHICH WOULD REDUCE TENSIONS IN THE AREA NOW AND AVOIDING FUTURE PROBLEMS -- SUCH A SOLUTION MUST BE ONE ACCEPTABLE TO ALL THREE PRINCIPAL PARTIES. THE U.S. BELIEVES THAT A CESSION OF TERRITORY ACCEPTABLE TO BELIZE WILL DO THAT. WE PRESUME THAT ANY AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE UK AND GUATEMALA WOULD BE AD REFERENDUM, PENDING ACCEPTANCE BY BELIZE. TODMAN SAID USG DOES NOT THINK THAT MEXICO WILL REASSERT ITS CLAIMS, AND WE ARE CONVINCED GUATEMALA WILL NOT ACCEPT FINANCIAL COMPENSATION AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR TERRITORIAL CESSION. HE AGREED WITH FORDE THAT THE PROBLEM MUST NOT FESTER, SINCE SETTLEMENT WILL BE MORE DIFFICULT AFTER LAUGERUD STEPS DOWN. FINALLY, TODMAN SAID THAT WHILE GUATEMALA AND UK ARE NEGOTIATING, INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE ISSUE IN THE U.N. OR ELSEWHERE IS NOT LIKELY TO CONTRIBUTE TO A SOLUTION. HE HOPED THAT THOSE INTERESTED IN THE FUTURE OF BELIZE AND IN PEACE WOULD KEEP THAT IN MIND. TODMAN SAID HE WOULD REPORT BARBADOS' VIEWS TO THE SECRETARY.
CHRISTOPHER

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